

Boulton Avenue Child Care Centre Program Statement

The Boulton Avenue Child Care Centre (BACCC) understands that children require activity, opportunity, and a safe, positive learning environment. When children are allowed to explore, develop relationships with other children and adults, build upon their abilities and recognize their growth, they discover who they are, and gain confidence of their place in the world. BACCC believes in supporting our children, from infancy to school-agers, with age-appropriate opportunities among a highly-trained staff that encourages parental involvement. We view all children as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

BACCC strives to enhance our children's personal development. With our staff's guidance and expert teachers from the community we hire for special classes, children are stimulated on various levels. We build:

- Communication and social skills through child-child and adult-child interactions
- Interest in the arts (music and song, dance, painting and other crafts)
- Fine motor development
- Gross motor development (outdoor play, guided sports activities, yoga)
- Self-esteem and decision-making
- Curiosity, initiative and independence.

Our staff is comprised of Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) who spend hours creating a flexible program plan on a weekly basis. That program plan is provided in an inclusive, supportive, and non-discriminatory environment. Because of our location in the Riverside/Leslieville area, we have a diverse group of teachers, children and families, providing a unique opportunity for our Child Care Centre to teach inclusion and acceptance.

Teachers change the program plans based upon suggestions/observations from the children themselves, as well as the needs our staff recognize. Our paramount goal is to constantly provide open communication between staff and families, children and staff, guest teachers, caterers, and among the children themselves. It's vital that if our children are to thrive we welcome and encourage help and cooperation with everyone who has a relationship with Boulton Avenue Child Care Centre.

At BACCC we believe that quality childcare facilitates the healthy growth and development of the "TOTAL" child.

Our program statement goals are achieved using the influence of Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years ("How Does Learning Happen"). We recognize that our childcare program must blend and enhance each child's family experiences with his/her

experience in the centre. We understand that by encouraging participation by the child's family we can offer a quality experience for each child.

The BACCC curriculum is consistent with "How Does Learning Happen?" (HDLH) and Ontario's pedagogy for the Early Years approach. BACCC uses Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) principles to develop our programming. Weekly program activities are linked to the Continuum of Development.

We endeavor to create a learning environment which allows the child to explore their world, grow and learn through play. The staff provides a program allowing each child to play in situations that facilitate growth in the following dimensions:

- A sense of Belonging
- A sense of Well-Being
- Opportunities and support for Engagement, and
- Opportunities and support for Expression.

BACCC GOALS AND APPROACHES

a) To promote health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children

A child can only grow in a healthy way based upon a strong foundation.

When considering the health, safety and well-being of the children in our Centre, the first consideration is programming and support for them:

- **Health and safety** - A licensed child care facility; BACCC meets all health and safety requirements from the Ministry of Education and meets local government bylaws. Outside our program rooms, we post vital information and updates, including, but not limited to, policies for emergency treatment (provided in the Parent Handbook). Our staff is trained and aware of complete health and safety policies and protocols and able to answer any question a parent may have.
- **Nutrition** – BACCC hosts children from families whose ability to afford/provide nutritional meals ranges. We make it a priority to make available the best food we can (within budget) so that our children's snacks and lunch will expose them to a variety of healthful options and educate their future eating. We recently changed to a new catering company (Real Food for Real Kids), who share our goal to educate both children and family members on the value of good eating habits at an early age. Our staff also model for our children, eating the food provided by the caterer and encouraging children to try new things. The menus surpass Canada's Food Guide recommendations and allow for cultural variety as well. Halal, vegetarian, and vegan meal requests are honoured, and lactose

intolerance concerns are accommodated. The menus for each month are posted on the Parent Communication board.

b) To support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers/staff

As it is often said, “It takes a village to raise a child.” BACCC works to encourage our children to play and communicate in a positive fashion, and we do the same with their families and parents. Our infant/toddler rooms provide daily communication (both written and verbal) to parents about the events in their child’s day. The preschool and school-agers receive daily oral reports about their children’s progress and events.

We encourage parent and family participation through joining our board of directors and having an open communication with the staff.

In our diverse BACCC community, we encourage and teach respect for diversity among staff, family, and children. Here are some of the ways in which we create an inclusive environment in our programs:

- Every child is encouraged and welcomed to participate in all activities, field trips and events.
- We acknowledge every family is different and every child is unique. We respect all values including (but not limited to) ancestry, culture, ethnicity, race, language, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, family environment, and developmental abilities and needs.
- Our teachers acknowledge the culture and first language of all children and create strategies to teach them in a healthful, helpful way.
- Ongoing education among teachers and staff ensures children are able to develop in an environment that accommodates individual needs and does not impede that learning process.
- We recognize and encourage diversity among staff and teachers, and support a welcoming environment for all, acknowledging our differences and planning curriculum so all children may benefit by learning about different cultures and livelihoods.

By teaching personal responsibility and social skills, including “manners” and the means to be “kind” and “polite,” our teachers impart valuable lessons allowing each child to develop problem-solving abilities and respect diversity and inclusion.

Conflict resolution is a vital part of the growing process. We assist children to be active participants in conflict resolution, and eventually adapt to resolve conflict on their own. This is supported by our policy encouraging parents to contact teachers directly when they have a concern, so it may be resolved before approaching the director or other staff. It is our hope that parents and staff model positive behaviour for their children.

c) Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.

BACCC creates an environment for the children to interact with others in other age groups while maintaining “separate” rooms for the infants, toddlers, junior preschoolers, preschoolers, and “school-agers.” By encouraging play-based learning and communication, our children learn to express themselves in a positive way and self-regulate.

We seek to be aware of, foster, support, encourage, respond to and document the diverse ways children express themselves, the various means they use to speak their minds and thoughts, and the variety of “languages” they use to communicate. Our programs work to incorporate children’s culture and home language.

Teachers spend small-group time with children of all ages, be it reading stories, asking questions, encouraging show-and-tell.

All adults promote a positive and supportive approach to all interactions with all children, peers and other adults in the room. Role-model appropriate social skills throughout the day to support learning and growth.

We promote interactions with children in a way that fosters self-esteem. Support the children as they learn to self-regulate their emotions and to recognize empathy. “Studies show that when educators modeled and helped children express feelings, recognize other’s feelings, and help others, children developed positive social skills such as perspective taking, empathy, and emotion regulation and were less likely to engage in problematic behaviors.”(HDLH, pg24-25)

d) To foster children’s exploration, play, and inquiry

Ontario recognizes that active, play-based learning is the best approach to child learning. We provide numerous opportunities for our children to role-play, create different forms of art, manipulate objects, and experience various materials.

At BACCC, our programming challenges children through exposure to new materials and experiences, and draw correlations to experiences at home or in the past. New learning happens through guest teachers, artists and athletes, who bring new ideas and curriculum to all children and staff. Focused play-based learning supports critical thinking and helps our children explore, question, problem-solve, and feel connected to their tasks.

Children have options and opportunity regarding with whom, what, where, when, and how they play at BACCC. Per the City and Province requirements, we keep toys, art supplies and books available to satisfy curiosity and creativity. Again, each child has specific needs and our teachers strive to meet every individual’s style of learning and encourage their interests.

e) To provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences

Play is required for every child's growth and development. At BACCC we believe that children learn in the most supportive environment, their interest. Staff observes and listen to our children while receiving input about development from parents. In this manner, we have a better grasp on what each child interests, and we fosters their development in those areas. Children often direct their own play and the staff adapt, while maintaining a planned program BACCC works hard to provide various materials for children to do art projects (both "2-D" and "3-D"), encourage their participation, understand their interests and support their imagination. Our guest artists and teachers do that same.

Our program will give children opportunities for room exploration in a variety of activities. We provide open-ended materials, easily—accessible opportunities that allow for exploration and discovery, and we invite the children to share their ideas and interest with staff and peers.

f) To plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.

BACCC believes that each child is unique, and thus has the right to experience activities that will ensure his/her full potential. Our teachers invite children to explore their environment in conditions that challenge each child's curiosity, and heighten his/her awareness and self-confidence. Through play, the child is best able to explore their world, to learn and to grow. To this end, the staff provides a program that allows for each child to play in situations that will facilitate the growth of healthy physical, emotional, cognitive and communication dimensions.

BACCC offers an environment with a balance of challenging, stimulating experiences, and experiences that are warm and secure. We believe that to achieve the maximum benefit from an experience, a child must feel that loved, valued and cared for.

Each room for each age group acknowledges the various stages of learning and development. Because each child is different, we take into account individual stages of growth and development, factoring in their family situation and exposure to various experiences. Staff regularly refers to the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) document, for child development information. We also provide parents regular Nippissing District Development Screen checklists (NDDS) to keep them apprised of their child's individual development.

g) To incorporate indoor and outdoor play, active play, rest, and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care.

BACCC has a rooftop playground, allowing for both daily indoor and outdoor play. We understand that children need active play, rest and quiet time to allow for proper physical and mental development. We consider each child's individual needs and incorporate parental input in how we program each child's day.

We utilize sports play, tactile activities, dancing, yoga, and other activities to allow the children in our care to express themselves, so each child can use his/her entire body to its full capacity. During the summertime, we encourage as much outdoor time as possible (with the use of sunscreen, hats, and proper shade) and take our children on field trips, or even picnics, playtime, and time with "Sam the Librarian" in our local parks.

Quiet time is a regular part of our day, allowing children to sleep or participate in quiet activities. We follow the medically-recommended sleep schedules for our infants, toddlers, and preschoolers while understanding that the older children may prefer to play quietly rather than nap during the post-lunch quiet time.

h) To foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children

BACCC continues to grow in our effort to expand parental participation in our programming, and extend better communication with families about what we do at the Centre. We understand that having exchanges with parents about their child/children's growth and development, their nutrition and daily needs, is integral to our work here.

Our parents are invited to visit and conduct programmes in the Centre, for their child's room or any room. They frequently visit the Director's office to discuss their children's needs and our Director takes an active role in communicating with parents daily, "checking in" to ensure parents feel comfortable sharing concerns or needs for their child(ren). We welcome parental input, especially when it comes to a child's behaviour or health, so we can take appropriate steps to guide the child through an important transition or see that s/he becomes stronger and healthier.

BACCC understands that many families are overburdened with work and other commitments and we provide a safe, caring space for their children during the day. We make every effort to send our parents home with valuable information about their child's progress, so they can build upon it in the family environment. We also share important health notices so parents who may not understand how to treat certain illnesses or follow recommended vaccination protocols can make educated decisions for their child(ren).

BACCC has an ongoing policy that encourages parental interaction with teachers, especially when a "problem" or "complaint" arises. Further, our Board of Directors (made up of mothers and fathers of children at our Centre) send regular communications to all parents, encouraging their input and participation in the Centre.

i) To involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff.

BACCC is grateful to have the support of a number of our community businesses, who provide both fundraising contributions to our Centre, as well as learning opportunities for our children during “field trips.” Our Riverside/Leslieville neighbourhood is full of local businesses and organizations that seek to develop community and communication amongst neighbours. We share those activities with parents via a parent Facebook page and learn about additional opportunities from parents via social media.

We have people from the community such as Queen/Saulter Librarian who comes in once a month to enhance our programming, and we have volunteers from George Brown University who are studying to become Early Childhood Educators. All these local resources provide a rich, rewarding environment to the children at

BACCC.

j) To support staff in relation to continuous professional learning.

BACCC prides itself in our staff longevity and our commitment to ongoing learning. We have several staff members who have been here for 10+ years. We provide individuals of all backgrounds the opportunity for employment, and offer new opportunities for staff to refresh their skills and re-certify in the important fields of CPR and First Aid. We also provide a generous health insurance package as well as vacation days.

BACCC supports the staff in continuous growth and professional learning. Through daily interactions with children, we find opportunities to self-reflect and co-learn on an on-going basis. We provide staff opportunities in-house professional training as well as attending outside learning workshops. As a part of BACCC staff contracts we are required to complete ten hours of professional development yearly and provide management with the proper supporting documents to be placed on file. BACCC have monthly staff meetings, to enlighten our staff of the current changes to our field and how to incorporate them into our program.

All our RECE's at BACC are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators. All other program staff are: Early Childhood Assistants, aside from our volunteer George Brown University students who are learning to serve in similar capacities.

k) To document and review the impact of the strategies set out in goals (a) through (j) on the children and their families

BACCC constantly works to document and share information about the growth and development of our children with their parents. Staff observes children daily and makes adjustments to programming accordingly, providing opportunity for all members of their “room” to grow and develop.

We know that it's imperative to promote our children's:

- Health, safety, nutrition and well-being
- Interactions with parents, child care and staff
- Communications and ability to self-regulate
- Exploration, play, and inquiry
- Self-initiated and adult-supported experiences
- Positive learning environments and experiences
- Indoor/outdoor play, including active play and quiet time
- Engagement and ongoing communication of our staff with parents
- Involvement with community and neighbourhood support
- Continuous professional learning of their teachers/staff

Our Practice

The following practices implement, monitor, and evaluate action plans and continually improve our performance

As we believe capturing and documenting our practice is a form of reinforcement of the learning process for educators, family and children, evidence of our practice will be captured in our documentation.

As educators who deliver high-quality early years programs, we also know that you are never done. Our commitment to continuous improvement will be achieved by management policies and practices that embrace the program statement.

All new staff on hiring, and all existing staff (annually) will acknowledge and review:

- a. This program statement document
 - b. All relevant and attached guidelines
2. Parent survey will be conducted annually to assess performance against the 11 key requirements
 3. Internal Rating (AQI) for each Plan of Action will be conducted annually for each program
 4. Undertake monthly staff meeting. Always include agenda item to discuss performance against the program statement and plan for improvement for next month.
 5. Undertake quarterly management/board meetings. Always include agenda item to discuss performance against the program statement and plan for improvement for next period.
 6. Gather together with staff annually to review and reflect on our performance and capture outcomes and set goals for the next period.
 7. Each monthly staff meeting will, on a rotation basis, include on the agenda, one of the 11 key strategies to create the conditions promoted by the HDLH document. Staff will discuss and reflect on current practices against this strategy, and any opportunities for improvement will be captured.

8. Budget a professional development investment for each staff and align the professional development with the program statement needs
9. The annual employee performance review will include a self-assessment of the 11 key strategies to create the conditions promoted by the HDLH document. Staff will annotate the self-assessment with an example of each and identify goals for improvement for the next year.

